UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1932
11 July 1995

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Srebrenica falls to Bosnian Serb army as NATO planes bomb advancing Serbian tanks; Dutch peace-keepers forced to retreat and thousands of refugees flee fighting.

* Secretary-General in Athens meets with Greek President; at round-table conference says Organization is only universal body with mandate to deal with global problems.

* UNFPA releases State of World Population report; says global fertility levels can be lowered dramatically if countries meet reproductive needs and move towards gender equality in all aspects of life.

* Decolonization Committee adopts resolution on visiting missions to Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The town of Srebrenica fell to the Bosnian Serb army today. A United Nations spokesman said Dutch peace-keepers were forced to withdraw to Portocari, which is within the "safe area" north of Srebrenica. More than 20,000 refugees were crowded into Portocari and another 7,000 were heading north. Two United Nations observation posts north of Srebrenica have been shelled by artillery, forcing peace-keepers to withdraw from one post. The headquarters of the Dutch battalion in Portocari and the hospital in Srebrenica, where Dutch peace-keepers were helping the wounded, had also been shelled.

Earlier, two planes from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) bombed a column of Bosnian Serb tanks south of the enclave. The close air support came after Serb forces ignored a warning to stop firing on the Dutch peace-keepers who were in a line about two kilometers south of Srebrenica, separating the Bosnian Serb advance.

The situation for civilians in Srebrenica was now intolerable, Special Representative Yasushi Akashi said. He demanded complete freedom of movement for

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relief supplies into the enclaves, including Sarajevo. The recent events in Srebrenica and elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina should not detract from the urgent need to invigorate the political process and bring the parties together, Mr. Akashi continued. With the absence of dialogue, the humanitarian crisis already confronting innocent civilians in Bosnia was likely to deepen.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was in Athens today, where he met with Greek President Kostis Stephanopolous and thanked him for his country's outstanding support for the United Nations. They discussed a number of issues, including the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, and the relationship with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Secretary-General thanked Mr. Stephanopolous for his decision to attend the Summit of Heads of State and Government, which will be held in New York from 22 to 24 October to mark the UN's Fiftieth Anniversary. At the end of the meeting the President awarded the Secretary-General the Greek Grand Cross of Honour.

Later, the Secretary-General took part in a round-table discussion on the role of the United Nations on the eve of the 21st century. He said the UN was the only universal body with a mandate to deal with global problems and he characterized the Organization as a "think tank for the problems of tomorrow". He also said the UN was mobilizing the support of all segments of society, including the media, business community, parliamentarians, and non-governmental organizations around the world.

* * *

Global fertility levels would be lowered dramatically if the world met reproductive health needs and moved towards gender equality in the next 20 years, according to this year's State of World Population report from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). At a UN Headquarters press conference to mark World Population Day, Stirling Scruggs, the Chief of the UNFPA's Information and External Relations Division, said the report encourages countries to pursue global development by meeting the needs of each individual. It calls for gender equality in every aspect of life -- social, legal, family, employment -- and especially in the area of reproductive health and reproductive rights for women.

The world population, which is currently 5.7 billion, was projected to reach 7.1 to 7.83 billion by 2015 and between 7.9 to 11.9 billion by 2050, Mr. Scruggs continued. If individual health and education needs, especially in reproductive health and family planning, were addressed then population levels would be at the lower level. Reaching the estimated 120 million couples worldwide who wanted but did not have access to services would be an essential

first step. It required women's empowerment, political will and resources.

* * *

The Special Committee on Decolonization has stressed the need to dispatch periodic visiting missions to Non-Self-Governing Territories to facilitate the full, speedy and effective implementation of the Declaration on Decolonization. In a resolution adopted yesterday, the Committee called on the Administering Powers to cooperate with the United Nations by receiving visiting missions in the territories under their administration. The missions could assess the situation in the territories and ascertain people's aspirations regarding their future status.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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12 July 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council requests Secretary-General to use all resources available to restore status of safe area of Srebrenica; demands Bosnian Serb forces withdraw from area immediately.

* Dutch peace-keepers shelter 30,000 refugees fleeing Bosnian Serb advance in Srebrenica safe haven; 12 more peace-keepers taken by Serb forces.

* Secretary-General condemns Bosnian Serb attack on Srebrenica; says situation will be worse if UNPROFOR withdraws from former Yugoslavia.

* Secretary-General stops in Cairo, en route to African capitals including Entebbe, Kigali, Luanda and Bujumbura.

* General Assembly and Security Council elect Rosalind Higgins of United Kingdom as first woman judge to International Court of Justice.

* General Assembly extends mandate of MICIVIH until 7 February 1996; partial results of first round of Haitian elections released.

The Security Council today, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, requested the Secretary-General to use all resources available to him to restore the status of the safe area of Srebrenica as defined by the 18 April 1993 Agreement for the demilitarization of Srebrenica. The Council demanded that the Bosnian Serbs withdraw from the safe haven immediately and that they immediately and unconditionally release unharmed all detained United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) personnel.

In unanimously adopting resolution 1004 (1995), the Council expressed grave concern at the plight of civilians in Srebrenica, and also demanded that the parties fully respect the status of the city as a safe area. The Council also

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expressed serious concern at the serious situation confronting UNPROFOR personnel and the many displaced persons within the safe area at Potocari, and demanded that all parties allow unimpeded access for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international humanitarian agencies to Srebrenica in order to alleviate the plight of civilians.

* * *

Bosnian Serb forces have over-run the United Nations base at the village of Potocari, north of Srebrenica, a United Nations spokesman said today. Potocari was crammed with more than 30,000 refugees who have fled from the Serbian advance on the enclave of Srebrenica. Another 8,000 people were fleeing from small villages and towns in the north. Much of the enclave, including Srebrenica town, was taken by Serb forces yesterday, despite NATO air action which destroyed two of their tanks. The Serb forces had been at the Dutch compound at Potocari, searching for possible Bosnian Government soldiers in the area.

Dutch peace-keepers had not retreated from their base and were providing as much support as possible to refugees, the spokesman continued. Food, water and medical care were urgently needed. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was negotiating with the parties on how to handle the huge number of refugees. About 40 Bosnian Serb trucks, carrying Srebrenica refugees, have left Potocari for Bosnian Government controlled areas where international agencies would assist them. A second convoy carrying some 1,500 refugees was being prepared for departure.

Meanwhile, Bosnian Serb attacks on peace-keepers were continuing, the spokesman said. Last night, two United Nations observation posts north-east of Srebrenica were over-run and twelve Dutch soldiers captured, bringing to 42 the total number of peace-keepers held by Bosnian Serbs. The captive peace-keepers were allowed to keep their side-arms and were not under any threat. The enclave of Zepa had been shelled and there had been Bosnian Serb troop movements in the area. Some 22 artillery rounds had also been fired against Gorazde.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has condemned the Bosnian Serb offensive against the safe area of Srebrenica. Speaking to reporters before leaving Athens today, the Secretary-General said the United Nations was seeking the withdrawal of Bosnian Serb forces. The main problem was the plight of thousands of refugees and he was in contact with the UNHCR to try and negotiate their relocation.

The Secretary-General said if the United Nations withdrew from the former

Yugoslavia the situation there would be much worse. He had been resisting pressure for 12 months for an UNPROFOR withdrawal and he would do whatever was needed to maintain the Force's presence. The Security Council had asked him to continue his efforts to try and find a solution to the problem. Despite recent aggression, for the time being, the only way to find a permanent solution was to negotiate. The United Nations would continue to negotiate regarding the problem of the refugees and also to find a solution to the problem.

* * *

The Secretary-General concluded his official visit to Greece today, leaving Athens on a trip which will take him to several African capitals including Entebbe, Kigali, Luanda and Bujumbura, a United Nations spokesman said. On his way to Cairo, he stopped in Borg El Arab, where he met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. They discussed developments in the former Yugoslavia, the volatile situation in Burundi, UN efforts in Rwanda and the question of refugee camps in Zaire.

The Secretary-General and President Mubarak also discussed the peace process in Angola, as the Secretary-General's visit to the region, and the situation in the Middle East. They also discussed the UN co-ordinating role in Gaza and the situation in Iraq and Libya. The Secretary-General then left for Cairo, Egypt, where he met with Egyptian Prime Minister, Atef Sidky.

* * *

The Security Council and the General Assembly voted concurrently today to elect Judge Rosalind Higgins of the United Kingdom to the International Court of Justice, the first woman to sit on the Court. Judge Higgins was elected unanimously in the first round of secret balloting in the Council. Her term of office will expire on 5 February 2000.

Elections to the Court require an absolute majority in both the Council and the Assembly. In the Assembly, which voted independently, Ms. Higgins obtained 155 votes in the first ballot. Judge Higgins will fill the seat left vacant by the resignation of Judge Sir Robert Yewdall Jennings.

Ms. Higgins, a professor of international law at the University of London, is Chairman of the Public International Law Advisory Board of the British Institute of International and Comparative Law. She is also a member of the Committee on Human Rights. Prior to that position, she was professor of International Law at the University of Kent.

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Acting without a vote, the General Assembly today extended the mandate of the United Nations component of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH) until 7 February 1996. The Mission's task is to verify full observance by Haiti of human rights and fundamental freedoms and make recommendations to further the establishment of a climate of freedom and tolerance to help strengthen democracy.

Meanwhile, partial results of Haiti's first round of elections held on 25 June have been released, according to a United Nations spokesman. The results cover seven of the nine provinces. In the Chamber of Deputies, candidates of President Bertrand Aristide's movement, Lavalas, won 16 out of 83 seats and Lavalas candidates won four of the 18 seats in the Senate. The election results for the other two provinces will be announced shortly.

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UNITED NATIONS

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13 July 1995

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Humanitarian disaster looms in Bosnian enclave of Srebrenica; male refugees transported to unknown destinations; women, children and elderly forced to walk across confrontation lines into Tuzla.

* Special Representative Yasushi Akashi calls Bosnian Serb attack and ethnic cleansing of United Nations safe area abhorrent; demands unimpeded access for UNHCR and other international agencies.

* Secretary-General continues official visit to Africa; meets with Ugandan President in Entebbe and Rwandan Prime Minister in Kigali.

* Secretary-General says some neighbouring countries of Rwanda strongly oppose deployment of United Nations military observers in their territories to monitor sales of arms destined for Rwanda.

* Lavalas coalition, endorsed by Haitian President Aristide, wins majority of municipal and community boards in all nine departments.

* Member States owe United Nations $2.7 billion as of 30 June; $870 million owed to regular budget and $1.8 billion owed to peace-keeping.

* * *

A humanitarian disaster was looming in the eastern Bosnian enclave of Srebrenica, a United Nations spokesman warned today. About 400 Dutch peace-keepers were doing all they could for 30,000 refugees who were still crammed in and around the UN military post at Potocari, north of Srebrenica. More refugees continued to arrive as others were being forced to leave by the Bosnian Serbs. Supplies were running desperately low.

Approximately 23,000 refugees had been taken by Bosnian Serbs to Bratunac, where they were screened. Some 11,000 women, children and elderly were then

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bused to the Tuzla area and forced to walk across the front lines -- some during the night -- into Bosnian Government territory. Several thousand of the male refugees had reportedly been selected for transportation to unknown destinations. The United Nations was extremely concerned about the well-being and security of the men.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, (UNHCR) was leading efforts to help refugees in Srebrenica and Tuzla, the spokesman continued. A six-truck convoy, which left Belgrade yesterday had reached Srebrenica. Another UNHCR convoy of 5 trucks was standing by in Belgrade, however, a convoy from Medecins Sans Frontiers had been blocked at the Bosnian border. Repeated requests by the UNHCR Mission chief for authorization to visit Srebrenica and Bratunac had been denied by the Bosnian Serbs.

* * *

Special Representative Yasushi Akashi today condemned the forced relocation of thousands of civilians form Srebrenica to central Bosnia by the Bosnian Serb forces, according to a United Nations spokesman. The attack and ethnic cleansing of a United Nations safe area were abhorrent acts which had earned the revulsion of the international community.

The Bosnian Serbs had delayed access for UNHCR relief supplies to thousands of displaced persons in Srebrenica and a humanitarian crisis was looming, Mr. Akashi said. Food and water supplies were critically low and there would be a severe outbreak of disease if immediate action was not taken to alleviate the plight of the civilian population. He demanded that Bosnian Serb civilian and military authorities immediately allow unimpeded access to UNHCR and other international agencies.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was in Kigali today, where he met with the Rwandan Prime Minister, Faustin Twagiramungu, and addressed a full session of the National Assembly including the cabinet, heads of diplomatic and consular missions, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. In the evening he attended a dinner hosted by the President of Rwanda, Pasteur Bizimungu.

Earlier, the Secretary-General stopped in Entebbe, Uganda, where he met with the President, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Foreign Minister, Rukahana Rugunda, and other top Government officials. They reviewed Uganda's relationship with the United Nations and the Secretary-General expressed his gratitude to the President for Uganda's support for UN peace initiatives and its economic assistance in neighbouring Rwanda and Burundi.

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The Secretary-General briefed President Museveni on the high-level debate on development in Africa which was held last week during the Economic and Social Council's substantive session in Geneva. Noting the current donor fatigue in developing countries, the Secretary-General expressed his appreciation for the crucial role played by African leaders in promoting national reconciliation in countries on the continent which were in crisis.

* * *

Some countries neighbouring Rwanda strongly opposed the Security Council's proposed deployment of United Nations military observers in their territories, to monitor the sale and supply of arms intended for use in Rwanda, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In resolution 997 (1995), the Council called upon States neighbouring Rwanda to ensure that arms were not transferred to Rwandan refugee camps within their territories. It also asked the Secretary-General to consult with those countries on the use of UN military observers to monitor arms movements.

In his report, dated 9 July, the Secretary-General said there was mixed reaction by Governments to the proposed deployment of observers. Some questioned its relevance and feasibility, arguing that international observers should be stationed in Rwanda to create a climate of confidence and encourage refugees to return home, thus reducing destabilization in the camps. Even countries who supported the proposal saw the initiative as a political first step by the international community to underscore its concern over the possible destabilization of Rwanda by military means.

The Secretary-General said there was growing recognition by countries in the Great Lakes region of the urgent and grave risks confronting them and the need for individual and collective measures to address those dangers. Many believed the primary responsibility was with the Rwandan Government but there was also a general acknowledgement of the value of regional action. The Secretary-General said he would explore the positions of Governments during his current official visit to Africa.

* * *

The Haitian Electoral Commission last night released more results from the first-round of voting in the 25 June elections, according to a United Nations spokesman. A coalition endorsed by President Jean Bertrand Aristide, the Lavalas Political Platform, has won a majority of municipal and communal boards in all nine departments (districts). The second round of elections is scheduled for mid-August.

Haiti's nine main cities will have a Lavalas mayor, including the capital

Port-au-Prince where the incumbent mayor, Evans Paul, from the National Front for Change and Democracy (FNCD) was defeated by the independent candidate, Manno Charlemagne, the spokesman said. Mr. Charlemagne, a popular singer, received 45 percent of the popular vote to Mr. Evan's 18 percent.

* * *

As of 30 June, Member States owed the United Nations a total of $2.7 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, $870 million was for assessments to the regular budget and $1.8 billion was for peace-keeping operations. Included in the $1.8 billion figure for peace-keeping is $8.2 million in peace-keeping assessments which is not yet due; assessments letters were mailed on 2 June and payment was due within 30 days.

The United States -- the largest debtor -- owed $527 million to the regular budget and $649 million to peace-keeping. The Russian Federation owed $21 million to the regular budget and $538 million to peace-keeping.

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UNITED NATIONS

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Security Council demands Bosnian Serbs respect civilian rights and immediately release males forcibly removed from Srebrenica; demands unimpeded access for humanitarian agencies and freedom of movement for UNPROFOR.

* Secretary-General views negotiation as main tool for achieving peaceful settlement in Bosnia; appoints Thorvald Stoltenberg Special Envoy to open negotiations with parties.

* Refugee situation in Tuzla worsens; ten die from dehydration.

* Secretary-General arrives in Angola for 3-day working visit; meets with President Jose Eduardo dos Santos to assess current status of Angolan peace process.

* Special Committee on Decolonization calls for peaceful resolution of the sovereignty dispute over Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

* Economic and Social Council told field coordination by United Nations agencies increases their effectiveness.

* * *

The Security Council today expressed deep concern over the forced relocation, grave mistreatment and killing of civilians by Bosnian Serbs in the safe area of Srebrenica. It demanded that the rights of those civilians be fully respected and that some 4,000 men and boys, reportedly removed by force from Srebrenica, be released immediately, in conformity with international law.

In a statement read out by its President, Gerardo Martinez Blanco (Honduras), the Council further demanded that the Bosnian Serbs allow unimpeded access by international humanitarian organizations to Srebrenica's civilian population and cooperate with procedures to determine those who wished to leave. They should be allowed to do so in an orderly and safe manner.

The Council demanded that both sides allow unimpeded movement of humanitarian relief and cooperate with efforts by international organizations and

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concerned governments to provide food, medicine and housing to the displaced. The Council also demanded that they respect fully the safety of United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) personnel and ensure their complete freedom of movement. The Council again called on the Bosnian Serbs to release unharmed, immediately and unconditionally, all detained peace-keepers.

Condemning the unacceptable practice of ethnic cleansing, the Council reaffirmed that those who had committed or ordered those acts would be held individually responsible.

* * *

The Secretary-General views negotiation as the main tool for reaching a peaceful settlement to the problems in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to a United Nations spokesman. In a letter to the Security Council, the Secretary-General said he had appointed Thorvald Stoltenberg, Co-Chairman of the Committee of the International Conference on the former Yugoslavia (ICFY), as his Special Envoy to assess the situation in Bosnia and to open negotiations with the parties there.

Mr. Stoltenberg will be joined today by Special Representative Yasushi Akashi and Carl Bildt, the other co-chairman of ICFY. They will fly to Belgrade to meet with the President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), Slobodan Milosevic.

Mr. Stoltenberg will underline the importance of the humane treatment of refugees and displaced persons and access for humanitarian convoys, the spokesman continued. He will demand the release of detained UNPROFOR personnel, the restoration of UNPROFOR's freedom of movement and the orderly redeployment of the Dutch battalion with all their weapons and vehicles. Mr. Stoltenberg will then go to Pale for discussions with Bosnian Serb leaders.

Meanwhile, the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in a statement released today, said it would not deal with Mr. Akashi or Mr. Stoltenberg. However, it would cooperate with the United Nations and meet with other envoys of the Secretary-General.

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The situation of the displaced persons at the UNPROFOR airforce base at Tuzla was very grave, a United Nations spokesman said today, as the forced relocation of civilians in the safe area of Srebrenica by Bosnian Serbs continued. An estimated 4,000 people were inside the airbase and another 9,000 people were crowded outside. The United Nations had set up tents and were providing medical care for the many refugees who were exhausted, dehydrated and ill.

Ten displaced persons had died, probably from dehydration and two others had committed suicide, the spokesman continued. Some refugees had formed groups

of 100 to 200 and had become violent. Additional UNPROFOR troops had been sent to Tuzla to help the refugees and control the situation.

The UNHCR had already identified centres in Tuzla, with facilities to handle the refugees, but the Bosnian Government had insisted on sending them to the airport, according to Soren Jessen-Petersen, the Director of the UNHCR in New York. The UNHCR hoped to move some of the refugees to the collection centres within 24 hours.

Meanwhile, UNPROFOR troops had withdrawn from the last observation post they were manning in the Srebrenica enclave. Bosnian Serb forces were now holding 55 Dutch peace-keepers, although UNPROFOR had been in touch with them and did not believe their safety was threatened. The safe area of Zepa in eastern Bosnia was reportedly under attack.

The United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees, Sadako Ogata, has strongly condemned Bosnian Serb acts against the Srebrenica civilians. It was one of the most blatant examples of ethnically motivated forced displacement seen yet in the war.

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The Secretary-General has arrived in Angola for a three-day working visit. He met with President Jose Eduardo dos Santos to assess the current status of the Angolan peace process and later addressed the staff of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III).

The Secretary-General attended a special session of the Joint Commission to review the latest developments in the application of the peace agreements. The Joint Commission is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol and is presided over by Special Representative Alioune Blondin Beye. In the evening, the Secretary-General was guest of honour at a dinner at the Presidential Palace.

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The Special Committee on Decolonization has approved a draft resolution calling for the peaceful resolution of the sovereignty dispute over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). Acting without a vote, the Committee yesterday approved the draft by which the General Assembly would ask Argentina and the United Kingdom to resume negotiations on the issue as soon as possible.

The Foreign Minister of Argentina, Guido di Tella, said his country was an economic ally of the United Kingdom with whom it shared many aims, and their disagreement over the Malvinas sovereignty would not prevent dialogue. However, using the right to self-determination to solve the issue would legitimize the past aggressive and forceful British acquisition of the Malvinas. He said Argentina would respect the way of the life of the islanders and would not pose a threat to anyone.

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A petitioner from the Legislative Council of the Falkland Islands, said that Argentina must understand that the islanders did not look on Britain as an oppressive colonial power but as a benevolent motherland ready to let them stand on their own two feet.

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Field coordination by various United Nations agencies had increased their effectiveness, the Economic and Social Council was told in Geneva. The Council has been holding discussions this week on United Nations operational activities for international development cooperation.

Thelma Awori, the United Nations Development Programme Resident Coordinator in Zimbabwe, said intensified coordination had been used to confront such problems as drought. Such coordination was easier to accomplish when a government was firmly established and respected. Andrew Arkutu, the United Nations Population Fund Country Director for Nigeria, said most countries accepted the concept of the country strategy and its value in aid management.

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UNITED NATIONS

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General cancels trip to Turkey in order to remain closer to developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

* Bosnian Serb forces poise one kilometre from Zepa after sustained offensive against enclave; UNHCR strongly condemns treatment of civilians after capture of Srebrenica.

* Secretary-General announces establishment of Commission of Enquiry into failed coup attempt and massacres in Burundi.

* Security Council permits supply to Rwanda of explosives for established humanitarian demining programmes.

* MINUGUA reports human rights situation in Guatemala could be improved with political will of parties and commitment of Guatemalan society.

* United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan to resume activities in region shortly.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided to cancel a three-day visit to Turkey because of the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to a United Nations spokesman. He was scheduled to arrive in Turkey tomorrow, but made the decision in order to remain closer to the theatre of operations in the former Yugoslavia. He is now expected to attend a meeting of the Contact Group in London on Friday.

The Secretary-General this morning arrived in Addis-Abbaba on a one-day official visit to Ethiopia, and had a meeting with President Meles Zenawi. He had earlier concluded a visit to Burundi. Among his appointments there were meetings with President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, Prime Minister Antoine Nduwayo and Defence Minister Firmin Sinzoyiheba.

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Mr. Boutros-Ghali also paid an official visit to Angola over the weekend. He had separate meetings with the President of Angola, Jose Eduardo dos Santos and the President of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), Jonas Savimbi. While en route from Luanda to Bujumbura yesterday he made a brief stop-over in Gbadolite, Zaire, to meet with President Mobuto Sese Seko.

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Bosnian Serb forces appeared to be poised one kilometre outside Zepa today, after launching a sustained offensive against the Bosnian enclave yesterday, according to a United Nations spokesman. Ukrainian peace-keepers continued to man four observation posts in the safe area. One of those posts was surrounded by Bosnian Serb forces, who made threats against the peace-keepers in the event of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air attacks. Three other posts were overrun by Bosnian Government forces yesterday.

Meanwhile, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata has condemned "in the strongest possible terms" the Bosnian Serb treatment of civilians in the fallen enclave of Srebrenica. Mrs. Ogata was today in Tuzla, where there are an estimated 23,000 displaced people from Srebrenica.

* * *

The Secretary-General has announced the establishment of an International Commission of Enquiry into the failed coup attempt and the subsequent massacres in Burundi. He made that announcement in an address in Bujumbura this morning.

In an address to the authorities and public officials of Burundi yesterday, the Secretary-General said African development was being severely hampered by political instability. Ethnic confrontations and civil wars exacerbated the continent's poverty and underdevelopment and had created seven million refugees and two million displaced persons, he noted.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali stressed that Africans must take their destiny into their own hands. In that connection, he attached considerable importance to the role which the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and regional institutions played in fostering security in Africa. He made a solemn appeal to all the people of Burundi for peace, tolerance and reconciliation.

* * *

The Security Council today decided to permit the supply to Rwanda of explosives intended exclusively for use in established humanitarian demining programmes. It said the supplies could be delivered notwithstanding the arms embargo on Rwanda, subject to the authorization of the Committee set up to monitor that embargo. The Council took that action, under Chapter VII of the Charter, by unanimously adopting resolution 1,005 (1995).

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The Council noted that unexploded landmines were a substantial hazard to the population of Rwanda and an impediment to the country's rapid reconstruction. It said that safe and successful humanitarian demining operations would require the supply of an appropriate quantity of explosives for use in those operations.

* * *

The United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA) has said that the situation there can be improved with the political will of the parties and the commitment of society as a whole. In a report issued today, it outlined positive steps taken in response to serious and repeated violations of human rights and a persistent climate of impunity. However, it said that the progress achieved was inadequate considering the magnitude of the problems in Guatemala.

The report noted that there had been a sharp increase in the number of complaints received by MINUGUA. It attributed the increase to the fact that the Mission had reached full capacity and completed the deployment of its regional offices earlier in the year. Meanwhile, the Mission's mandate had been better publicized and the population had learned more about it. The mass media and specialized non-governmental organizations had played an important role in that regard.

The Mission said that both the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) had violated certain commitments under the 1994 Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights. It called on the Government to launch a nation-wide campaign for justice and tolerance, with the participation of all sectors of society. It said it would assist that effort through programmes aimed at institution-building and promoting a culture of respect for human rights.

* * *

The United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan will shortly resume its activities in the region, a spokesman for the Organization announced today. The Head of the Mission, Mahmoud Mestiri, will arrive in Islamabad tomorrow. He will then proceed to Jalalabad and Kabul and other major Afghan centres.

Ambassador Mestiri will spend several weeks in Afghanistan, the spokesman noted. He will meet with various leaders across the political spectrum to assess developments since he left the region in April. He will also prepare a plan for carrying forward the peace process with the assistance of the United Nations.

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UNITED NATIONS

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General discusses Bosnian crisis with military and political aides in Geneva; says meeting urgent needs of refugees is priority for United Nations action.

* Situation in Zepa deteriorates rapidly amid heavy mortar fire by Bosnian Serbs; Bosnian Government troops steal weapons and equipment from Ukrainian peace-keepers in Gorazde.

* UNICEF launches vaccination programme for child refugees from Srebrenica; says Bosnian Serbs have detained children as young as fourteen.

* UNHCR to chair meeting of Humanitarian Issues Working Group of International Conference on Former Yugoslavia in Geneva tomorrow.

* Fifth Committee recommends appropriation of $1.44 billion for United Nations peace-keeping operations in former Yugoslavia, Angola and Western Sahara.

* IFAD provides $2.5 million grant to Agricultural Management Training Programme for Africa.

* Special Committee on Decolonization considers draft resolution on responsibility of administering Powers to promote development in 12 Non-Self-Governing Territories.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali arrived today in Geneva, having concluded his tour of African countries. He decided yesterday to cancel an official visit to Turkey in order to be closer to developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Secretary-General will meet this afternoon and tomorrow with his military and political experts to discuss the Bosnian crisis. He will also

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be in constant contact with officials in New York and elsewhere in order to formulate a plan of action. He said today that responding to the urgent needs of refugees would be a priority.

This morning in Addis Ababa, the Secretary-General met with the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Kingsley Amoako. They discussed various ECA activities and ways to revitalize the Commission in order to serve Africa better, particularly in economic and social development. The Secretary-General stopped over in Cairo on his way to Geneva, and had a meeting with Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa.

In a related development, Mr. Boutros-Ghali has decided to send Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs Lansana Kouyate to Dar-Es-Salam and Nairobi as his Special Envoy to brief the Presidents of Tanzania and Kenya regarding his tour of African countries.

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The situation in Zepa deteriorated rapidly today as Bosnian Serb forces subjected the town to heavy mortar fire, according to a United Nations spokesman. Ukrainian peace-keepers continued to man several observation posts but were surrounded either by the Bosnian Serbs or, in some cases, by Bosnian Government forces.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) yesterday succeeded in evacuating more than 80 wounded persons from Srebrenica, the spokesman continued. Meanwhile, United Nations military observers interviewed Bosnian Government soldiers who survived a six-day trek through Serb-held territory from Srebrenica to Tuzla. The soldiers indicated that some 12,000 people had escaped from the enclave last week. However, only half that number had so far reached Government-controlled territory.

In another development, Ukrainian peace-keepers in Gorazde reported that Government soldiers had stolen their equipment and weapons at gunpoint. When the peace-keepers resisted, their commander was assaulted and shots were fired. The United Nations strongly protested the incident and negotiations were underway for the return of the stolen equipment.

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The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) today called attention to the plight of child refugees from Srebrenica. It said that some 60 per cent of the refugees from the fallen enclave currently in or around Tuzla were children, and that most of them were under the age of five. It also noted that the Bosnian Serbs had detained children as young as fourteen.

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The Fund announced that it would begin a vaccination campaign to prevent outbreaks of epidemics, having determined that the vast majority of the child refugees had not had appropriate vaccinations.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata, will chair a meeting of the Humanitarian Issues Working Group of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia in Geneva tomorrow. Mrs. Ogata called for the meeting -- the first such since November 1994 -- last month. A total of 60 countries have been invited to attend, including all the countries of the former Yugoslavia and donor countries.

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The Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) has approved draft resolutions by which the General Assembly would appropriate or authorize some $1.44 billion for various United Nations peace-keeping operations. The Committee also recommended the appropriation or authorization of $57.5 million for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the International Tribunal for Rwanda.

The Committee approved $1.08 billion for the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO), the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) and the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF) headquarters, for the period 1 April to 30 November. It also approved $100 million for UNPROFOR's rapid reaction capacity for the period 1 July to 30 November.

In addition, the Committee approved $150 million for the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) for the period 9 February to 8 August 1995, and $66 million from 8 August to 31 December subject to the extension of its mandate. It also approved $50 million for the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) for the period 1 December 1994 to 30 September 1995.

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The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) have concluded a $2.5 million grant agreement to help finance the second phase of the Agricultural Management Training Programme for Africa. The Agreement was signed at the Fund's headquarters in Rome on Friday.

The Programme was established in 1984 to increase the availability of trained African managers in the agricultural and rural development sector. It

also aims to improve the effectiveness of rural development projects and strengthen the capacity of selected African management-training institutions. During its first phase from 1984 to 1992, the Programme trained 700 people and benefitted 80 projects in 27 sub-Saharan countries.

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The Special Committee on Decolonization is currently considering a draft resolution which would reaffirm the responsibility of the administering Powers of 12 Non-Self-Governing Territories to promote their economic and social development. The Territories are American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands.

By the draft resolution, the Special Committee would reaffirm the inalienable right of the peoples of the 12 Territories to self-determination. It would also reaffirm that it is ultimately for those people themselves to determine freely their future political status.

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UNITED NATIONS

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WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Secretary-General says UNPROFOR presence must be maintained in Bosnia and Herzegovina, citing importance of humanitarian mission; discusses situation with senior officials in Geneva prior to Contact Group meeting on Friday.

* Bosnia and Herzegovina says UNPROFOR framework is at an end, but does not formally withdraw consent to Force's presence; urges international community to lift arms embargo.

* Security Council deplores treatment of Ukrainian peace-keepers in Zepa and Gorazde by Bosnian Government and Serb forces; demands free humanitarian access to Bosnian safe areas.

* UNPROFOR says fall of Zepa appears imminent as Bosnian Serb forces reportedly enter town; Force attempts to negotiate safe passage out of area for civilians.

* Secretary-General has meetings with President of ICRC, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and Co-Chairman of International Conference on Former Yugoslavia.

* ICAO predicts world airline passenger traffic will grow by 6 per cent in 1995, and by 7 per cent in 1996 and in 1997.

* Russian Federation tells Human Rights Committee it has nothing to hide from international community; says mechanisms for democracy have been set up despite fall in living standards.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today said that the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) must be maintained in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He told correspondents in Geneva that a peace-keeping presence on the ground was a

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prerequisite for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. He made those comments after meeting with senior officials to discuss the political, humanitarian and military dimensions of the situation in the former Yugoslavia.

The Secretary-General said that he had called today's meeting in order to establish a clear position prior to the ministerial meeting of the Contact Group in London on Friday. He expressed the hope that the upcoming meeting would produce new and clear guidelines for dealing with the situation, adding that whatever decision was reached in London would have to be approved by the Security Council.

It was necessary to create a new momentum in favour of the diplomatic and political process, including direct negotiations between the parties, the Secretary-General continued. He noted that there had been no direct contact between the different leaders in the former Yugoslavia for 18 months.

* * *

The UNPROFOR framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina is at an end, according to Bosnian Foreign Minister Muhamed Sacirbey. He told correspondents at Headquarters today that the Force was now so flawed and so inadequate to address the situation that it was counter-productive and should come to an end. However, he said that his country had not formally withdrawn its consent to UNPROFOR's presence, and added that he was engaged in constructive dialogue on possible options.

Mr. Sacirbey held out the possibility of bilateral or multilateral arrangements by which States could continue to perform whatever appropriate tasks there might be in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Any future arrangement should be without political consideration, such as the arms embargo, and should be consistent with the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It should also take into consideration the practical situation on the ground.

The Foreign Minister strongly criticized the arms embargo, which he described as a quid pro quo for UNPROFOR's presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He said his country needed ammunition, helmets, anti-tank weapons and some artillery in order to defend itself. He went on to say that United Nations peace-keepers had shown themselves to be courageous and committed. However, their mission had been a half-measure from the beginning, and had now become a fraction of its former self.

* * *

The Security Council has expressed concern at the harassment and threatening of Ukrainian peace-keepers in Zepa and Gorazde by Bosnian Government and Serb forces. In a statement issued last night, Council President Gerardo

Martinez Blanco (Honduras) stressed that using force against peace-keepers, and using them as hostages and human shields, was illegal and deplorable. He demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the peace-keepers.

The Council also demanded that the Bosnian Serbs cease all attacks against the safe area of Zepa. It expressed concern at the prevailing humanitarian situation in the Bosnian safe areas and demanded free humanitarian access to them to alleviate the suffering of the civilian population, which lacked shelter, food and medical supplies.

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The fall of Zepa appeared to be imminent today after Bosnian Serb forces reportedly entered the town from the west, according to a United Nations spokesman. UNPROFOR was attempting to negotiate safe passage out of Zepa for the population of 17,000 civilians, while Ukrainian peace-keepers abandoned all but one of their observation posts in the area.

UNPROFOR Force Commander Lieutenant-General Rupert Smith met with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic to discuss the situation in the eastern enclaves and to protest the seizure by Government forces of weapons and equipment from Ukrainian peace-keepers. The President acknowledged that "uncontrolled elements" of the Bosnian Army were responsible, although the stolen items were not returned.

Meanwhile, fighting continued to intensify on the eastern and western confrontation lines of the Bihac pocket, the spokesman said. Forces loyal to rebel Muslim leader Fikret Abdic and Serbs in neighbouring Croatia appeared to have launched a coordinated offensive against Bihac.

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Among his appointments in Geneva today, the Secretary-General had a meeting with the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Cornelio Sommaruga. They discussed the ICRC's humanitarian work throughout the world, particularly in the former Yugoslavia, and cooperation between it and the United Nations.

Yesterday, Mr. Boutros-Ghali met with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Jose Ayala Lasso. Mr. Ayala Lasso reported to him on his recent trip to African countries, particularly with regard to the situations in Rwanda, Angola and Burundi. The Secretary-General also had a meeting with Co-Chairman Stoltenberg, whom he had recently asked to explore diplomatic avenues which could be used to achieve the objectives identified in Security Council resolution 1,004 (1995).

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Total scheduled passenger traffic on the world's airlines is expected to grow by over 6 per cent in 1995, and by around 7 per cent in 1996 and in 1997, according to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). It forecast that total scheduled passenger traffic on ICAO member States' airlines would reach 2,222 billion passenger-kilometres in 1995, 2,372 billion in 1996, and 2,538 billion in 1997.

The ICAO, a United Nations agency, sets international standards and regulations for the safety, security, efficiency and regularity of air transport. It also serves as a medium for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation.

* * *

The Russian Federation has nothing to hide from the international community, according to Russian Justice Minister Valentin Kovalev. He made that comment in Geneva yesterday as he presented his country's report to the Human Rights Committee. He expressed the hope that the report would prompt a professional and frank dialogue with Committee members and provide a basis for assistance with internal problems.

Mr. Kovalev told the Committee that while the dissolution of the Soviet Union had brought about a reduction in standards of living, it had also permitted the establishment of mechanisms for democracy. He said the greatest step in that direction had been the recognition of private rights, as only public laws had existed for the past 70 years.

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